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EDITORIAL

As Marcos brings sufferings, so the people must fight

Ferdinand Marcos Jr acted blind and deaf to the suffering and grievances of the people when he declared the state of the nation as "sound." In fact, in just one month that he has been in power, the people have been pulled deeper into poverty and crisis.

His promises of prosperity and development are pure fantasy. He laid his regime's direction that is no different from the worn down neo-liberal path which, in the past four decades, has led nowhere but to recurrent crisis and suffering.

Marcos ignored the cries of the Filipino masses, especially over rising prices of food and basic needs. Even state agencies could not deny the 6.1% inflation rate last June, which climbed further to 6.4% this July. If ordinary people are asked, the weight of their burden is beyond measure.

Marcos simply dismissed the cry for wage increases despite the continuous slide of the peso, which in July was only ₱0.84 compared to its value in 2018. Marcos remained silent over the long-term grievance of workers against the oppressive contractualization system. He offered no solution to the widespread problem of unemployment except to further increase the number of workers being sent to other countries.

He disregarded the clamor for genuine land reform. Marcos merely promised to suspend by one year the collection of amortization of titles under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). He wants those with "land transfer certificates" to pin their hopes on a law that will nullify their loans and unpaid amortization, which is, in fact, futile in the face of the widespread land grabbing by large mining and plantation companies. Despite serving as secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Marcos is doing nothing amid rapid increases in the prices of sugar, eggs and other food commodities. Marcos' only plan is to drown the peasant masses in loans purportedly to serve as capital to make them use "new technologies."

Marcos acted as spokesperson of foreign banks and corporations when he laid out economic policies

long dictated by the imperialists. He is deaf to the people's cry, but clearly listens to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank when he declared that attracting foreign capital is the central policy of his regime. He conjured the illusion that the "strategic industries" will enter "ecozones." Never have foreign investments brought industrialization to the Philippines, and will not bring progress to the local economy at this time of global capitalist crisis.

With a bankrupt government inherited from Duterte, Marcos now speaks about new taxes. He himself is pouring fuel on the people's fury over his failure to pay taxes estimated to be worth ₱203 billion. He aims to fleece consumers and small businesses, including those who are unemployed and earn little money from small online businesses. While touting the CREATE law, which cuts taxes on foreign capitalist investors, he vetoed the bill that would have granted tax exemptions to the honoraria received by teachers who served in the last election.

Like almost all past presidents, the construction of lavish infrastructure is the main content of the "progress" that Marcos claims he will bring. Never in the past four decades did the Philippine economy develop because of the construction of bridges or roads. Like how Duterte more than doubled the Philippines' debt to almost ₱13 trillion, so will Marcos sink the country further into debt if he continues building the dams, roads, bridges, railways, reclamation and other projects, which are operated by foreign companies, dependent on imported equipment and destructive to the environment. Furthermore, these projects give the bourgeois compradores control over vast public resources and utilities that government should, in fact, be running.

Not for one moment in his more than one hour speech did Marcos address the problem of widespread human rights violations and abuses by the reactionary state's armed forces. That means, he approves how, in his first month in office, 41 were killed by the police in the "war on drugs;" and how his soldiers accosted 16 and killed 13, including three children, in its counterinsurgency war. He also approves of the AFP's relentless red-tagging, "surrender" drive, bombing and harassment of civilian communities.

Clearly, the Filipino masses cannot expect any benefit from the puppet, fascist and oppressive Marcos regime. If they do not fight collectively, they will undoubtedly be further oppressed and exploited. Therefore, the people should continue to raise their voices and strengthen their militant action to demand measures to alleviate their suffering. They must unite, and consolidate or establish unions and organizations in factories and workplaces, offices, communities, schools, and churches.

The people's consciousness and awareness about the problems and issues they face, and how they are deceived and oppressed, must be raised and sharpened. The lies and illusions conjured by Marcos and his imperialist masters must be rejected.

The people must carry forward various forms of struggle to fight for the reforms they need. Above all, they must advance the armed struggle to fight for their greater aspiration for national liberation and genuine democracy. AB



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Contents

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State forces arrest 5 in two weeks

State forces arrested five activists one after another during the past weeks.

Combined military and police forces last July 28 arrested Makabayan-Bicol coordinator and former Bayan Muna nominee Marites Pielago based on trumped up charges of murder and frustrated murder. State forces laid siege on the Dr. Nilo O. Roa Memorial Foundation Hospital in Barangay San Francisco, Naga City where Pielago was undergoing medical treatment.

Two Lumad brothers were arrested based on a trumped up case of human trafficking on the day of Ferdinand Marcos Jr's State of the Nation Address (SONA) last July 25. The police arrested Bakwit School students Mawing and Ismael Pangadas after the counter-SONA rally at the Freedom Park in Roxas, Davao City.

Meanwhile, police elements arrested last July 22 farmer Gina Montenegro based on a trumped up charges of rebellion in Purok 3, Hinapuyan, Carmen, Surigao del Sur.

Last July 15, elements of the state also arrested Anakpawis Partylist member Arjay Verdera in Bulusan, Sorsogon. The police made it appear that a caliber .38 pistol and ammunitions were seized from him.

Forced "surrender". Elements of the 15th IB and the NTF-Elcac deceived and forced members of associations in Cauayan, Negros Occidental to "surrender" last July 7-8. Among those ordered to show up were the Caliling Small Agricultural Farm Workers Association, Tuyom Farmers Association, Small Farmers of Manuling, Paghiliusa sang mga Mangingisda sa Lugway at Paghiliusa sang Mangingisda sa Guiljungan, local fisherfolk organizations.

Collaborating with the local government, the military made it appear that the victims will be awarded livelihood programs but were instead made to surrender as Red fighters.

Eviction. The 2nd IB, in collusion with local village officials, evicted more than 94 peasant families who have been tilling a 550-hectare agricultural land forming part of the 1,807-hectare "ranch" handed over to them by Masbate governor Antonio Kho.

The land they have been tilling covers the villages of Cabungahan, Calapayan and Villaluna in Cawayan. These are agricultural lands, but misdeclared as cattle ranches in order to circumvent agrarian reform. AB

Under the guise of fake encounters

Military kills pregnant woman, 2 children and 3 farmers

Cases of indiscriminate firing by soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against civilians were recorded one after another in recent weeks. The soldiers made it appear that the victims were members of the New People's Army (NPA) killed in encounters.

Christina Jacolbe, 5-months pregnant, of Sityo Banderahan, Barangay Trinidad, Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental was killed by elements of the 62nd IB last July 26, at 5 a.m. who indiscriminately fired at their hut. The victim's 16-year old daughter Everly Kee Jacolbe and family relative Rodan Montero, who were in the same house, were also killed in the incident. Christina is a former daycare teacher who was forced to stop working after being red-tagged and hounded by the military.

In Batangas, 9-year old Kyllene Casao was killed when the 59th IB opened fire in Sitio Centro, Barangay Guinhawa, Taysan last July 18. She and her father were on their way home from tending their goat when they were fired upon by the soldiers.

The 59th IB is preventing human rights groups from conducting investigations in the place of incident and is hiding Kyllene's father. After negotiations with the local government, human rights groups succeeded in pushing for an independent investigation which would include advocates of children's rights and the United Nation's Children's Fund.



Also in Batangas, the 59th IB killed Maximo Digno, a farmer in Barangay Malapad na Parang, Lobo last July 26. According to the residents, Digno is mentally handicapped. A day earlier, 59th IB soldiers indiscriminately fired their weapons nearby.

In Occidental Mindoro, the 76th IB killed Dante Yumanaw, who belongs to the indigenous Mangyan-Batangan and resident of Sityo Tiyabong, Barangay Ligaya, Sablayan last July 15. He is the chief of the said village.

AFP soldiers are harassing the victim's family and are forbidding them to visit the wake. AB

Thousands join rally against Marcos SONA

According to the group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), up to 8,000 people marched last July 25 along Commonwealth Ave. in Quezon City to convey the real state of the nation, coinciding with Ferdinand Marcos Jr's first State of the Nation Address (SONA). Earlier, the Philippine National Police baselessly prohibited rallies along the highway and even threatened to arrest whoever violates the prohibition. The local government of Quezon City allowed the rally only after the organization asserted their right to peaceably assemble.

The rally primarily focused on the people's plummeting socio-economic conditions in the face of skyrocketing prices of oil, food and basic needs. The group raised a large banner with the call: "End the crisis! Fight for land, wages, jobs and rights!"

Together with organizations comprising the People's Summit, Bayan also presented a 9-point people's agenda amid the intensifying crisis. Underscored here is the call to address inflation and cancel taxes on consumers and demands for measures to jumpstart agriculture and food production.

The protesters also condemned the deployment of 21,000 police personnel for the first SONA. There was also an attempt to suppress the wearing of outfits with political messages, which has been practiced by Makabayan bloc representatives during the past years.

Delegates from progressive groups in Southern Tagalog joined the protest. They launched a caravan to Metro Manila last July 24 and staged a picket at the Chinese embassy in Makati, the Petron national office, and other areas. Progressive organizations from Central Luzon also joined the march.

Counter-SONA protests were also launched by democratic organizations in the cities of Baguio, Naga, Bacolod, Iloilo, Davao, General Santos and in the town of Kalibo.

Meanwhile, two Lumad youth who joined the protest in Davao City were arrested detained by police on the basis of trumped up charges.

Overseas, migrant Filipinos also expressed their united opposition to the Marcos II regime's anti-people and anti-poor policies. Filipinos staged protests in 10 states in the US, as Filipinos also demonstrated in five provinces in Canada and in three states in Australia. There were also protests in Hongkong. The protests were held last July 24 and 25. AB

Activists launch #ML50 campaign. The ML50 Campaign (Martial Law 50) was launched at the Quezon City Sports Club last July 21 to commemorate the 50th year of martial law and its dark days under the US-Marcos I dictatorship. Martial law victims, veterans and new activists led the activity together with democratic organizations. The campaign aims to defend the truth and history and continue with the demand for justice for the victims under the reign of the dictator's son.

Free Elmer Forro! Relatives, friends and colleagues of Elmer Forro staged a "silent protest" in front of the Iloilo Hall of Justice last July 29 calling fot his immediate release. Forro, who is Bayan-Panay's secretary general, was arrested last March 29 based on trumped up charges of frustrated murder.

Isabela farmers mount anti-mining barricade. Farmers, indigenous peoples and settlers in Cordon, Isabela collectively set up a barricade to stop Golden Summit Mining Corporation (GSMC) from fencing their farms and residential areas. GSMC intends to mine more than 150 hectares of former pasturelands. According to the residents, the company has yet to acquire a new permit but is already encroaching on their lands. In the past, complaints were filed against GSMC's open-pit mining which destroyed rice and corn fields, and the Diadi River. It also does not pay just wages to its miners.

Detestable profit-taking by oil companies

Petron boasted last August 1 that the company's profits ballooned to ₱7.7 billion ($138.9 million) in the first half of 2022, or twice its ₱3.87 billion ($69.8 million) profits during the first half of 2021.

Local subsidiaries of oil companies make claims that the almost weekly increase in diesel and gasoline prices is the result of rising prices of crude oil in the global market. This is despite the fact that local companies actually import refined petroleum products from China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore and other countries.

The record-high profits of monopoly oil companies belie their claims that rising global prices of crude oil is the reason behind the almost weekly increases in the prices of petroleum products. The truth is that fuel prices are being pushed up mainly because of the insatiable greed for profits by the monopoly capitalists.

Last July, monopoly oil companies in the US reported raking in record profits during the second

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Rehabilitation, not reclamation: People's resistance



Ferdinand Marcos Jr declared during his State of the Nation Address last July 25 that he has no intention of suspending infrastructure projects begun under Rodrigo Duterte. These include at least 30 reclamation projects at various levels of implementation, design and preparation.

None of these projects has not received criticism by scientists and environmental organizations. Workers, fishermen, small businessmen and farmers who face dislocation and loss of livelihood have resisted the planned island reclamation in Manila Bay and smart cities in Cebu and various provinces.

Destructive to nature

There have been many scientific studies related to the damage caused by reclamation projects both on coastal areas and nearby uplands. These destroy habitats of thousands of types of marine life, as well as many species of birds. These destroy mangroves that serve as natural barriers against flooding, rise in ocean water, strong storms, tsunami and storm surges similar to what occured in Tacloban City at the height of supertyphoon Yolanda.

In addition, artificial islands will exacerbate natural risks to bays, such as rapid drops in sea level and liquefaction. Siltation from dredging activities destroys nearby coral reefs. Areas from which land and other materials are sourced to create artificial islands are also adversely affected.

According to scientists from the group Agham, some arguments used to justify these projects are incorrect. An example of this is the argument that Manila Bay around Metro Manila is "dead" because fish, coral reefs, seagrass and mangroves in this area no longer exist. Although the area is no longer considered fishing grounds, it forms part of the waters covering the provinces of Bulacan, Cavite and Bataan. Any activity on any part of its waters affects the entire bay. Overall, it is still considered one of the most productive fisheries area in the country.

Potential damage is more stark in the case of the more diverse coastal areas of Cebu, Dumaguete and other bay areas with more developed marine life and integrated ecosystems.

Anti-people

Thousands are set to lose their homes and livelihood due to reclamation projects. Most of the them are low-income workers and small fisherfolk. According to scientists, up to 1.24 million people will be significantly affected by reclamation projects covering nearly 40,000 hectares nationwide. Overall, food supply will be reduced to the destruction of fish and other marine resources. In Metro Manila, at least 100,000 residents in Baseco, Parola, Tondo Foreshoreland and Malate are set to be displaced from four reclamation projects alone.

In Bulacan, San Miguel Corporation has driven away 700 fisherfolk families through bribery, deception and outright violence. Fish harvest has decreased in nearby villages after the company illegally cut mangrove trees.

In Cebu, 500 fishermen in Liloan and Consolacion will lose their livelihood as a 235.8-hectare reclamation project will destroy fishing grounds and mangrove trees. In addition, 2,000 workers in nearby ship docks will lose their jobs. The same dislocation will happen to fisherfolks in three barangays in Minglanilla.

In Dumaguete, 1,000 fisherfolks will lose their livelihood, while the jobs of 38,000 other residents from eight barangays will be put in jeopardy.

In all of these cases, only large businesses and foreign companies will benefit from the buildings, homes, shops, casinos and other tourist hobbies that will be built on these islands. *(Read the first part in the previous issue: Destructive Reclamation Projects: Duterte's Heritage to Marcos.)* AB

From page 4

quarter (April to June). Exxon Mobil Corp., the largest US company, said it earned $17.9 billion during the second quarter, almost four times the $4.69 billion profit during the same period in 2021.

Meanwhile, Chevron Corp earned more than twice its biggest profit in 2008. In the second quarter of the current year, the company made $11.6 billion in profits. This is four times bigger than its $3.1 billion profit during the same period in 2021.

Shell also made $11.59 billion in second quarter profits this year, twice its $5.5 billion profits in the second quarter of 2021. Total Energie also reported second quarter profits of $5.8 billion, more than twice as the same period last year. AB

AFP's relentless bombings torment civilians

It was reported in July that the 79th IB, a command under the 303rd IBde, planned to drop bombs on the Minapasuk Mandalagan Mountain Range in Negros. This plan supposedly forms part of the counterinsurgency campaign against the New People's Army (NPA). Before the planned three-day bombing, the military tried to evict residents of 21 villages in two barangays of Calatrava through relentless harassment, threats and intimidation that prompted stern protests by residents and local agencies.



The planned bombing will hit the Northern Negros Natural Park, a key biodiversity area and one of the most widely protected areas in Northern Negros. The bombing would endanger the animals and plants which have long been cared for in the area.

This incident is just one of the many attacks of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against civilian communities and forests in the guise of pursuit operations against units of the people's army.

Relentless

Reports received by Ang Bayan (AB) show that the AFP has dropped at least 591 bombs, fired 589 artillery shells, and conducted 74 rounds of aerial strafing from 2017 to July 15 this year. Actual numbers are even higher because not all aerial strikes and shellings are reported in AB or the mainstream media. Of these, the number of bombing incidents (56) in 2021 was the highest.

Bombing rounds were launched in 36 or 44% of the provinces. From the report, the highest incidence was recorded in Bukidnon (22), followed by Northern Samar, Davao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur, Agusan del Norte, North Cotabato, Cagayan, Quezon, Negros Occidental, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, Camarines Sur and Mountain Province.

Of the bombs dropped, only 109 or 18.44% hit NPA camps. Relentless strikes caused more casualties (68 killed and 20 wounded) among soldiers and police of the reactionary state, than on the side of Red fighters (66 killed and 15 wounded). At least 10 civilians were reportedly killed and four were wounded.

The biggest damage caused by direct bombing of civilian communities was wrought in a Moro community in Maguing, Lanao del Sur and a small miner's camp in Santa Clara, Gonzaga, Cagayan. The bombings are also detrimental to pregnant women and elderly people, and cause severe trauma to children. In total, up to 10,339 families or approximately 60,000 individuals were forced to evacuate because of these.

Data shows that majority of the AFP bombings did not have a clear target. Only 6% of the bombing incidents hit an NPA camp. Up to 82% were carried out in mountain ranges where there was no presence of NPA units. Of these, 35% were aimed directly or near the vicinity of civilian communities and damaged farms and infrastructure.

In bombing suspected NPA camps, the AFP dropped not less than 10 bombs everytime. These created deep holes in the ground and loud noises that traumatize residents, their farm animals, as well as forest animals.

According to the data, the AFP had to drop 10 bombs and multiple bullets to kill a single Red fighter. The AFP uses excessive firepower (about 500- and 250-pound bombs) against NPA camps with makeshift tents. Such powerful bombs were designed to shatter buildings made of cement and steel. *(In the next issue: The adverse effects of aerial bombing on the environment).* AB

CPI (Maoist) holds Martyrs' Week of Remembrance

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of India (Maoist) honored and remembered the heros of the Indian revolution during its Martyrs' Week of Remembrance last July 28 to August 3. They hailed the 124 Indian revolutionaries who died while performing their revolutionary duties the past year and their great leaders such as Charu Majumdar (who died 50 years ago) and Kanhai Chatterjee (who died 40 years ago.)

"The Central Committee salutes all the martyrs who made the supreme sacrifices for the ultimate goal of establishing socialism... and for the new Indian democratic revolution," CPI (Maoist) Spokesperson Abhay said in a statement.

In a separate statement, the CPI (Maoist) Central Region Bureau hailed the indigenous or Adivasi martyrs of the country and their continuing struggle.

They also called for support to the Advivasis' struggle against imperialist plunder and defense of ancestral land in relation with the upcoming Indigenous People's Day on August 9.

The indigenous peoples are victims of the fascist regime's repression and discrimination against the non-Hindu people. India's indigenous peoples account for more than 8% of the population. They face oppression as anti-indigenous laws like forced registration, forest ownership and others are being pushed. AB

Davao Oriental mining brings disasters and dislocation

Decades upon decades of operations by Pujada Nickel Project in Banaybanay City in Davao Oriental have caused disasters and widespread dislocation. This project brings profits to the local government and agencies, and is violently defended by the military and police despite the clear ill-effects of mining in the area.



Last January, the once clear waters of Mapagba and Pintatag rivers in Banaybanay turned orange due to siltation brought about by Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corporation-Arc Nickel Resources' operations. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ordered the suspension of the company but was allowed to resume operations after two months.

The original mining concession in the area was granted in 2004 to Austral Asia Link Mining Corporation and Hallmark Mining Corporation, both controlled by Asiaticus Management Corporation (Amcor). In partnership with Amcor is BHP Billiton, an Australian-based company, known to be the world's largest mining company. It pretends to be an advocate "responsible mining."

The concession covers 17,000 hectares at the center of and adjacent to two declared protected areas —the Mt. Hamiguitan Wildlife Range and Pujada Bay Protected Seascape and Landscape. Mt. Hamiguitan is home to some endangered wildlife like the Philippine Eagle. Meanwhile, dugongs are frequently sighted in the Pujada Bay. In 2016, the former DENR secretary ordered the suspension of the whole project and said the permit granted by the agency was "insane." Rodrigo Duterte lifted the suspension in 2019, allowing it to operate anew.

Davao Oriental's local government led by its governor alleges that the mine is outside both protected areas. Nonetheless, mining affects the quality of water, air, biodiversity, resources and surrounding communities. According to a research, open-pit mining causes pollution beyond the area covered by the operation. Satellite images reveal the denudation of Mt. Hamiguitan and the total destruction of land formations in the watershed.

Since the mine is adjacent to Pujada Bay, its mine tailings are highly likely to flow towards and cause destruction to coral reefs. Chemical wastes will also pull down the quality of water which will kill fishes and other marine life and plants.

From the outset, residents, the church and environmental groups have vehemently opposed the mining operation. This year, the Mati people's opposition was revitalized after Amcor's reopening was announced. As a result, company officials attempted to bribe Mati Bishop Abel Apigo last July 27 for the church to withdraw its opposition to the destructive mining.

"Decades upon decades of mining accompanied by logging operations in Davao Oriental have denuded the forests, poisoned the rivers, and destroyed peasant and Lumad communities and their livelihood," said the National Democratic Front-Southern Mindanao Region (NDF-SMR). The masses know the effects of mining all too well, especially during heavy rains and typhoons. Earlier this year, residents were beset by typhoons and heavy rains, landslides and alarming cases of diarrhea. "These were compounded by the reactionary regime's failed disaster response," it said.

Contrary to what mining companies boast, the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent it acquired from the native Mandaya community in the area is worthless. It was given by a fake council of elders which the company put up and is not recognized by majority of the Mandayas.

Permitting and justifying the mine's continuous operations is stupid and irresponsible, said the NDF-SMR of the officials of the local and national government. In practice, only the revolutionary movement, through the New People's Army, has been consistent in punishing these destructive companies. AB

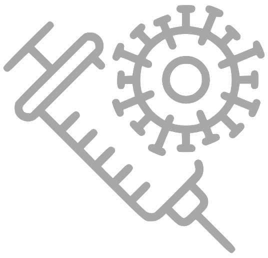
Residents oppose Romblon mining

ROMBLON RESIDENTS AND environmental groups marched in protest last July 26 to the front of the Department of Natural Resources office in Quezon City.

They called for an end to the planned mining in Sibuyan Island. The residents said that mining will be detrimental to their livelihood which is dependent on the marine resources, ricefields, copra, and vegetable crops.

In 2011, Atlas Philippines Mining Corporation's operations in Sibuyan were stopped for damaging the island's environment. However, in September 2021, the company was allowed to resume operations after Rodrigo Duterte issued Executive Order 130.

IN SHORT

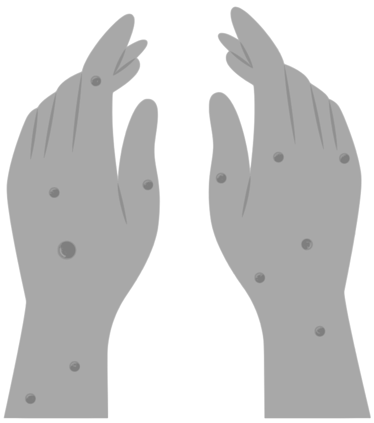


4.25 million doses

of anti-Covid-19 vaccines expired last July due to slow and erratic vaccination campaigns. This is despite the fact that only 65% have received two vaccine shots.

0.75

percent increase in interest rates of the US Federal Reserve. Many fear this will cause businesses and economic slowdown leading to recession.



MONKEYPOX

is a contagious disease similar to smallpox. It is currently spreading across the world and was declared by WHO as a "global health emergency" as of June 23. Its first case in the Philippines was reported last July 29.

JULY 30 AND AUGUST 4, 1969

Back-to-back attacks of the newly established NPA in Clark Airbase in Angeles, Pampanga. Six American soldiers were killed and four others were wounded in the attacks. These are in addition to the four killed and two wounded American soldiers in a prior NPA offensive.

Source: *Ang Bayan, Vol. 1 No. 4 September 15, 1969*

NOT BACKING DOWN

Twitter again suspended accounts of revolutionary forces last August 1.

To stay updated, follow the CPP and Ang Bayan's new accounts at **@prwc_info2**, **@cpp_angbayan1** and **@cpp_marco1**, for the latest news on the revolutionary movement.



ONLY 227,808 hectares

of mangrove forest remain in the Philippines from 450,000 hectares in 1920 due to relentless expansion of commercial fishing grounds.

Source: *Mangrove Vegetation Index, 2019*

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intensity of the earthquake which hit Ilocos, Cagayan Valley and the Cordilleras last July 27. Ten died, more than 300 were wounded and approximately 300,000 were affected.

Source: *National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, August 1*

Amjad Abu Alia

16-year old Palestinian shot by Israeli forces last July 29 in a protest action against occupation of the Palestinian territories. He is the 17th Palestinian child killed by Israel since January 2022.

A retrospect of ancestral domain landgrabbing in Far South Mindanao

The United Nations set August 9 as the International Day of Indigenous Peoples. National minorities in the Philippines mark this day with their continuing struggle for land and rights. Among them are the Lumad in far south Mindanao who have suffered decades upon decades of attacks, most especially under Ferdinand Marcos Sr's martial law.

The worst destruction of forests in south Mindanao started during the 1950s. Foreign companies carried out widespread plunder under the Parity Law which allowed the US and other imperialist enterprises to exploit the Philippines' natural resources. They utilized the puppet state and the reactionary armed forces to drive away the Lumad and grab the riches of their lands. This pushed the indigenous peoples to launch armed and unarmed resistance in the defense of their communities.

Uprisings became widespread in the 1950s and 1960s against logging, expansion of cattle ranches and landgrabbing by some local bureaucrats in Sarangani and South Cotabato. In Davao del Sur, the Klagan in Malita drove away Capt. Villamor, an officer of the American military who grabbed the Lumad people's land and exploited them.

To defend the interests of big business, the Philippine Constabulary at the start of the 1960s launched a large-scale operation in Malungon, Tampakan and areas surrounding Mt. Matutum. Amid the tumultuous situation, the people were caught unawares of Dole Philippines' entry in Polomolok, Tupi and Mt. Matutum in 1963. More than 200 natives opposed the plantation and killed the soldiers and paramilitaries who were defending the companies.

Japan and the US each undertook oil and iron explorations in parts of Maasin and Alabel in 1965 and 1968. Come 1969, US company Sierra Madre Corporations started its operations. But this was resisted by the B'laan, forcing the company to leave after two years.

The latter years of the 1960s saw the prevalence of armed resistance by the B'laan in Kyumad, Alabel and the frequent attacks against ranches. Aiming to pacify these, Ferdinand Marcos Sr in 1971 sought a dialogue with the leaders of the uprising. They were promised the recognition of Kyumad as an ancestral domain on the condition that the community will submit to the programs of the Presidential Assistance for National Minorities or Panamin.

Violence and deception

Marcos launched intense armed attacks alongside Panamin in order to neutralize the resistance of minority communities. Marcos assigned his crony Manuel "Manda" Elizalde as president of the agency.

Elizalde and the Panamin's programs in the T'boli communities in South Cotabato drew controversies. After Marcos declared Kematu as part of the 5,224-hectare Tagabili Reservation, Elizalde established the agency's center of operations there. But shortly after, mining operations in Kematu started through the collusion of Marcos-Elizalde with some tribal leaders.

In 1971, Marcos and Elizalde shocked the whole world with the "discovery" of a group of "Stone Age people" residing in a cave in the mountain of Tasaday in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato. In order to supposedly protect the "Tasaday tribe," 19,000 hectares was immediately declared as Tasaday Reservation.

But the regime's lies and humane pretensions were later exposed. It became clear that the "discovery" of the Tasaday was merely a political maneuver to save the image of Marcos. Also, the establishment of reservations was to make sure that only the Marcos-Elizalde clique will benefit from the natural resources and whatever is left of the forests in the ancestral lands. *(Next issue: Victories in Lumad struggles during martiall law.)* AB

Davao riders, UP guards score victory

TWO ASSOCIATIONS OF contractual employees scored successive victories the past week.

In Davao, the National Labor Relations Commission ordered Foodpanda Philippines Incorporated to pay a ₱2-million compensation package to seven delivery rider workers illegally terminated last year. Foodpanda is a food-delivery service company.

The seven were part of the hundreds of Foodpanda workers who protested on July 2021 over unclear rules in computing of income share per delivery, lack of benefits and protection. They also questioned the 10-year suspension of drivers who participated in a protest after the management refused a dialogue.

Meanwhile, in Quezon City, the University of the Philippines-Diliman administration on July 29 terminated its contract with the FEMJEG Security Agency. In June, the company fired more than 100 security guards who had been working at the university for decades before UP gave them the contract. The guards under the agency complained about delays and wage repression. They are also denied benefits and were threatened with termination from work if they complained to the Department of Labor and Employment. AB